
Imprimatur,

Oct. 14. 1686.

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A
SERMON
PREACHED
UPON

St. Peter's Day.

Printed at the Desire of Some that heard it,
WITH SOME
ENLARGEMENTS.

By a Divine of the Church of *ENGLAND*.

L O N D O N:
Printed for *Ric. Chiswell*, at the *Rose and Crown* in
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MEMORANDUM

TO THE PRESIDENT

FROM THE SECRETARY

SUBJECT: [Illegible]

Reference is made to the letter from the [Illegible]

dated [Illegible]

and the [Illegible]

[Illegible]

[Illegible]

[Illegible]

[Illegible]

A
SERMON
PREACHED
UPON
Saint PETER's Day, &c.

MATTH. XVI. 18. beginning.

*And I say also unto thee, that thou art
Peter, and upon this Rock I will build
my Church.*

THE Text, as we call it, is *part* of the Gospel for this Day; and according to the Interpretation which some give of it, it is the *whole* Gospel of Christ: These two Words, *PETER* and *CHURCH* being so comprehensive, that if they be well learnt, there needs no further pains to come acquainted with all the rest of the Christian Religion.

A Sermon Preached upon

For in *PETER*, who they say is the *Rock* here spoken of, all the Bishops of *Rome*, in all succeeding Ages, are included; who inherit the very same Privilege which *St. Peter* had, of being the Foundation of the Church. Which CHURCH, say they, is nothing else, but that Body of Men and Women who are united unto the *Roman* Bishop as their Head: From whom all Ecclesiastical Power is derived unto all other Pastors of the Church. Over whom, and consequently over all Christians, he hath a Sovereign Authority, to declare the Rule of Faith, to determine the Canonick Books of Scripture, and the Traditionary Word: In brief, To be as infallible a Guide in the way to Heaven, as *Saint Peter* was. So that if any Man would know infallibly, what the Christian Religion is, he need be at no more trouble, but only to enquire of that Church which adheres to him as the Foundation, and resign up himself to the belief of whatsoever it teaches him, because it cannot possibly teach him amiss.

These are wonderful things, and we are highly concerned to examine, whether there be ground enough in this Speech of our Saviour, for the Church of *Rome* to raise upon it so large, so high, so glorious a Structure to it self, as this is. Because, if it appear that our Lord did give, not only to *Saint Peter*, but to all the *Roman* Bishops, and to them alone, this Universal Pastorship and Power, to Teach, to Rule and Govern all Christians, of whatsoever sort they be;

be; we must without any Contradiction, obediently submit unto it; and have not so much as this liberty left us, To enquire whether the *Roman* Bishops do not extend their Power too far, in commanding us to do those things which are directly contrary to the Commands of Him from whom all Power comes: Because, tho we think we see clearly that they do, yet we must not believe our own eyes, but them who tell us they do not. On the contrary, if it can be demonstrated that our Saviour in these Words to *St. Peter*, did not confer any such power upon *him*, much less upon all that succeed in the *Roman See*, we shall discern how little reason we have to commit our selves to the Guidance of that Church which builds upon such a sandy Foundation: And that it is our certain duty to adhere to the *Constitutions* of this Church of *England*, whereof we are Members; which not only teaches, *That no manner of Obedience and Subjection is due to any such Forreign Power*; but commands us who are Ministers in it, *To use the utmost of our Wit, Knowledge, and Learning, purely and sincerely, (without any Colour or Dissimulation) to teach, manifest, open and declare; four times every Year (at least) that all such Power is for just Causes taken away and abolished.*

In obedience to which Injunction, which is the very first *Canon* of our Church, I shall in this Discourse endeavour, according to the best of my Understanding, and most diligent Enquiry, to give you the Genuine and Sincere Meaning of those Words (which are the prime Foundation of that high

An. 1603.

A Sermon Preached upon

high Claim now mentioned) and that as they were expounded in the first and best Times of the Church; when the Doctors of it were not engaged in those unhappy Controversies, which now disturb, or rather distract the Christian World.

And if I prove, That neither the Apostles after they heard these Words from Christ, no not St. *Peter* himself, who is said to be most, nay only concerned in them; nor the Ancient Bishops that succeeded them, no not the Bishops of *Rome* themselves, when they on purpose treat of these Words, did think of any such Monarchy (it may be truly called) as is now built upon them; you will conclude, that this is a new Doctrine, and that the Asserters and Maintainers of it, not we who oppose it, deserve the Name of *Innovators in Religion*.

And for the clearer Exposition of them, I think it will be necessary,

First, To observe the Occasion upon which they were spoken; and from thence proceed,

Secondly, To show in what sense they were anciently understood; And

Lastly, What Inferences and Deductions are necessarily to be made from their Interpretations.

PART I.

P A R T I.

The Occasion of the Words.

THE meaning of these Words of Christ will be better understood, when we have well weighed the occasion on which they were spoken: which was this. The Opinion and Discourse of the Country concerning our blessed Saviour; which was thus reported to him by his Disciples, when he askt them about it, vers. 14. *Some say, that thou art John the Baptist, some Elias, and others Jeremias, or one of the Prophets.* That is, there were very various and uncertain Opinions conceived of him; for tho they all agreed in general, he was a great Man; nay, a Man of God (as they called the Prophets) yet they were not resolved, much less settled in any particular determinate notion of him.

To try, therefore, the Proficiency of those who were constantly bred in his School, he asks what their Opinion was, vers. 15. *But whom say ye, that I am?* Unto which Simon Peter makes this reply, vers. 16. *Thou art Christ, the Son of the Living God.* The Question, ye may observe, is propounded to them all, not to Peter alone. He doth not say, Peter, *whom dost thou say, that I am?* But he saith unto them, that is, to his Disciples before mentioned, *Whom say ye, that I am?* Unto the same Persons of whom he enquired, *Whom do*

men say that I am ? v. 13. He now saith, *But whom say ye that I am ?* And yet the Answer to this Question is not returned by them all, or by several of them, as before ; but by one only, Simon Peter answered and said, &c. What should be the reason of this ?

The plainest and most undoubted answer is, That there was no difference of Opinion among *them*, as there was among the *common People* ; but they were all of one mind in this matter, and therefore no more offered to speak but one ; because they had all, but one thing to say, That he was *Christ, the Son of the Living God*. To the first Question, one of them alone would not return an Answer, because they had not all met with the same Opinion, but some with one, some with another ; and therefore every one related what he had heard the People say about him. But to this Question, they had but one Answer to make, being all agreed in one and the same Belief ; and therefore, it was sufficient for one to speak the mind of every one, to whom the Question was put.

But still the Reason is demanded, why *St. Peter* rather than any of the rest, made this Answer ? To which *St. Chrysostom* thinks it enough to reply, *When men are moved by the Spirit to do or say a Thing, it is in vain to ask a Reason of it*. Yet he, as well as others, have given us divers Reasons which have a Foundation in the Holy Scriptures.

I. First, Because he was more warm and forward than the rest; of a zealous and active Spirit, which made him ready in Speech, and all other Motions, as well as quick of Apprehension, and ardent in his Affection. Many of the Fathers (a) have given this account of it, as well as St. Chrysostome, who mentions it often; and here particularly affirms it to be the reason, why he *stept*, or rather *leaped forth* (as his word is) and prevented the rest, in this Confession.

(a) S. Hierom.
in loc. S. Cyril
in Job. 21. 13.
S. Greg. Naz.
Orat. 34.

And if they had not told us this, the Story of the Gospel would have furnished us with *ten* or *twelve* Instances of his forwardness, most of which are collected by (b) St. Hierom, I will name but *two* (b) *Matt. 14.* or *three*. The *first* of them, is mentioned in this ^{28.} very Chapter, v. 22. When our Lord acquainting his Disciples what things he should suffer, *Peter*, out of a certain heat, which was natural to him, and a vehement, but imprudent love to our Lord, (as St. Chrysostoms words are) takes upon him to chide our Lord, for having such a purpose, advising him to be more favourable to himself. A *second* instance is in the *14th* Chapter, where we read of his forwardness to go unto our Saviour upon the Sea, tho he had not Faith enough to support him there. A *third*, in his forwardness to draw his Sword on our Saviours defence, when the Soldiers laid hold on him in the Garden, 26. 51. These things show his temper to have been so warm and zealous, that we need no other Reason for his speaking first, the mind of them all.

II. But others add that he was the *eldest* of the Company, being a married man when he entred into our Saviours Service. His Brother *Andrew* indeed, was first acquainted with our Saviour, *Joh. i. 40, 41.* But, when they were called to be his constant Attendants, (which was not till some time after) *Peter* is mentioned before him, as the Elder of the two, *St. Matth. iv. 18. Mark i.*

- (a) *Heref. l. i. 16. Epiphanius* (a) indeed thinks otherwise, making *Andrew* the elder Brother; but it is unreasonable to follow his Opinion alone (especially when he alledges no Tradition for it) against the Sense of many other Ancient Writers, who
- (b) *Ad An. 31. n. xxiii. Baronius* (b) confesses) lookt upon *Peter* as elder than him. Which *St. Hierom* gives as the Reason, why *St. Peter* was preferred before *St. John*, the beloved Disciple, to be the *first* in the Order of the Apostles; because he was the elder. His words are very remarkable, and worthy to be read of all, in his first Book against *Jovinian*, where he sets forth the Prerogatives of *St. John*, as most dear to our Saviour, because he was a Virgin, and so continued to the end. Unto which he brings in his Adversary objecting, That the Church was founded upon *Peter*, who was a married Man: *Tho in another place* (saith *St. Hierom*) the very same is said of all the Apostles, and they all received the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, and the solidity of the Church was equally established on every one of them. Yet among the Twelve, one was therefore chosen, that an Head being constituted,

ted, all occasion of Schism might be taken away. But why was not John, being a Virgin, chosen? This was yielded to his Age; for Peter was the Senior. Otherwise, he will have St. John to have had the Preheminence, as it there follows: Peter an Apostle, and John an Apostle; a Married man, and a Batchelor: But Peter only an Apostle; John both an Apostle, and an Evangelist, and a Prophet.

III. To which may be added, That he was the first of them all called to be Christs constant follower, as appears from what was now observed, That tho he was not the first that believed on Christ, yet he was the first that our Lord called from his secular Employment, to wait upon him, and to be always with him; And therefore called by some of the Ancients, the *first Fruits of the Apostles*.

IV. For, lastly, upon such accounts as these, he was made the first Apostle; not in Power and Authority; for therein, as hath been said already, and will appear more anon, they were all alike; but in orderly Precedence, which is natural and necessary in all Societies. And being the Foreman, who so fit as he, to speak for them all, as he did not only now, but upon other occasions, *Matth. xix. 27.* and *Joh. vi. 67, 68, 69.* Upon which account, St. Chrysostome fitly calls him, *στόμα τῶν Ἀποστόλων*, the Mouth of the Apostles: Which he frequently repeats *, and alledges this, together with his heat and zeal, as the Reason of his speaking, rather than

the

* In *Matth.*
xvii. 24. *Al.*
i. 23. *Galat.*
ii. 2.

the rest. For all of them could not make answer to the Question our Saviour here askt, without Confusion; and they all having but one thing to say, therefore one spake for them all. And who fitter to be their Speaker, than he that was the Senior of all; the leading man of the Company; whose Age and forward Zeal, and early entertainment into our Saviours family, had given him the priority of place among the Apostles?

But observe then, That if he spake because he was the *Mouth of the rest* (as the Ancient Opinion was); then, as he spake the Sense of them all, so he spake in all their Names: And that which he said, was the voice of all the Apostles. For either he was not the *Mouth of the Apostles*; or his Confession was the Confession of the whole Body of the Apostles, who spake the same in him. None of the Ancients, that I can find, doubted of this. St. Hierom, particularly, hath this note upon these words, *Petrus ex persona omnium Apostolorum*, &c. Peter in the Person of all the Apostles confesseth, *Thou art Christ the Son of the Living God*. And the famous saying of St. Austin, is now grown so familiar to all, that I need only Translate it, Peter answers, *one for all*. Thus St. Cyprian (a), and St. Ambrose (b), from whom this Sense is transmitted down to later times; for Dionysius Carthusianus follows it, whose words are these, in our language, Peter as the Principal, gives the answer for them all.

(a) *Epist. ad Cornel.*

(b) *L. vi. in S. Luc. c. 9.*

And there are two Reasons the Fathers give for this; the one is a *moral* Reason, the other a *mystical*. The *Moral* is, To avoid Confusion; it being unseemly and disorderly for all to speak at once; therefore he being first, spake the mind of them all. The *Mystical* is, To denote the Unity that should be among the Apostles (and consequently the Unity of the Church, and of all that believe) according to the Prayer of our Saviour, when he was about to leave the World, (*Job. xvii. 21.*) *That they all might be one, as He and the Father were one*: That speaking the same thing, and perfectly agreeing in the Doctrine they preached, the *World might believe that the Father had sent him*. This was much in the thoughts of St. Cyprian (in more places than I can easily number) and other *African* Fathers, who followed after him.

But I do not find any of those Ancient Writers mention this as the reason of *Peters* speaking, and not any of the rest (which Bellarmine (a) makes his peculiar Prerogative) *Because he alone knew at this time, that Jesus was the Eternal Son of God*. St. Hilary in the *Latin* Church, and Basil of Seleucia in the *Greek*, were the first and only Persons of any account, (who by the Rule of the *Roman* Church, ought not to be followed against the stream of ancient Interpreters) that had in their minds this conceit. For Euthymius, who follows them, is of no consideration for his Antiquity.

What Advantage, they that contend for it, can make of this notion, I do not see; (because, if Christ

(a) L. 1. de Pontif. Rom. C. xix.

Christ did now reveal this to St. Peter alone, it was that it might be known to them all) yet, I do not think fit to grant it; because it is apparently against common Reason, and against the History of the Gospel, and against the best and most ancient Authority.

(b) Orat. III.
contra Arianos.

1. In reason we cannot think the Apostles to have been such dullards, (to use no harder word) as in two years time and more, when they had been in our Saviours School, heard his words, and seen his wonderful Works, not to have learnt the *τὸ κείμενον ἐκείνου ἡμῶν* (as St. Athanasius (b) calls this Confession) the peculiar and principal Article of our Christian Faith, that he was *God Incarnate*, the *Word made Flesh*. Especially, when they had been introduced into this belief by John the Baptist; who had told them as much, before they were admitted Christs Disciples. Andrew, it is certain, was not ignorant of it, who thereupon sought his Brother Simon, and told him, *we have found the Messias*, i. e. Christ, *Joh. i. 40, 41*. For John the Baptist had reported; how he saw the Spirit descend on our Saviour, and had heard the voice from Heaven, and therefore bare record, saying, *This is the Son of God*, v. 34. Nay, he bare witness, that he was Gods only begotten; for he cryed, saying, *No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him*, v. 15, 18. By this Testimony they were drawn to our Saviour, who at the very beginning manifested forth his Glory, (that is, his Divine Majesty) by such illustrious Miracles, *That his Disciples believed*

on him, (Joh. 2. 11.) That is, did not doubt of the truth of what *John* had said; and which, as you shall see presently, the very Devils themselves openly acknowledged and confessed. Who then can believe after all this, that they were ignorant of the very first thing in our Religion? With other points we find them unacquainted; but to fancy them not to have known this, is to make them as insensible as so many stones; and in no other sense to have deserved the Name of *Stones* and *Pillars*, (whereby they are afterward called) but only, because they were so hardened in stupidity, that nothing would enter into them, no more than our words will into the hardest Flint in the World. What wretched Christians do we make them, if after such means of instruction, we suppose them to have learnt nothing of the very foundation of Christianity?

2. But besides this, it is directly against the express Testimony of the Holy Scriptures; which informs us, that several Persons had before this time, made as full a Confession of the Faith, as *St. Peter* himself. They, for instance, who were with our Saviour in the Ship, when it was tossed on the Sea by a contrary Wind, and when *St. Peter's* heart had failed him, as he walkt with our Saviour on the Water, came and worshipped him (after he had made the Sea calm) saying, *Of a truth, thou art the Son of God*, Matt. xiv. 33. Nay, more early than this, as soon as ever *St. Peter* was acquainted with our Saviour, *Nathanael* (who is thought not without some reason to be the Apostle *Bartholomew*)

lomew) made as distinct, and clear a Confession as his, *Thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel*, Joh. i. 49. I shall not insist on the Confession of *Martha*, Joh. xi. 27. because it was afterward, towards the Conclusion of our Saviours life: The plain acknowledgment of the Mariners and Passengers in the Ship (who were the persons *St. Hierom* thinks, that came and worshipped him, and made the foremention'd Confession) is a sufficient proof, that this was not a secret, known to *St. Peter* alone by a special Revelation.

St. Chrysostom, indeed, is of Opinion, That there is more in these Words of *St. Peter*, than in theirs, or in *Nathanael's*: Who only confessed him to be the adopted Son of God, but *St. Peter* went further, and confessed him his Son by Nature. But the reason he gives is insufficient, which is only this: That our Lord here pronounces *Peter* blessed, which he doth not say to the rest. For there might be other Reasons for pronouncing him blessed: Particularly this, That the Shipmen perhaps made that Confession only in a great transport of Passion; but he upon a settled and deliberate Perswasion; and that notwithstanding the various opinions that were in the Country about him, which might have distracted the Apostles minds, if they had not been attentive Considerers of the Testimonies our Lord gave of his Divinity. Besides, he seems in effect, to have called *Nathanael* blessed, tho he does not use the word: For, because he believed upon such a small and single Testimony of his Divinity, as his seeing him under the Figtree, He tells

tells him he would reward his Faith with stronger Confirmations of it, Joh. i. 50. *Thou shalt see greater things than these.* Which is a promise containing much of his Grace and Favour toward him; and is thus enlarged, v. 51. *And he saith unto him, Verily I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see Heaven open, and the Angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man:* That is, more manifest tokens of his Divinity, upon which the Angels waited and attended; just as they did upon the Divine Majesty in the Old Testament, Gen. xxviii. 12. And if all this do not seem sufficient to evince the Truth, what think you of the Testimony which St. Peter bears to them all, that they did *believe and know that he was the Christ, the Son of the Living God?* Joh. vi. 69. To which may be added, that our Blessed Lord and Saviour himself, solemnly gives Praise and Glory to God, for revealing these things, which concerned his Kingdom (of which this was the first) unto them all, *Matth. xi. 25, 26.*

And lastly, As this Opinion is against Reason and Scripture, so it is most certainly against the Authority of the Ancient Fathers. For as St. Hierom (a) ^{(a) In Matth. xiv. 33.} alleges the Confession of the Mariners against the *Arians*: So the Orthodox commonly used this as an Argument against them, That the very Devils had more Faith than they; for they confessed what the *Arians* denied, That Jesus was the true and natural Son of God. So they interpret those words, *Mark iii. 11. (b).* Which *Maldonate* himself acknowledges the Fathers are wont wonder-
fully 85.

fully to amplify against those Hereticks; which they could not have done, if they thought, less was meant by it, than by this Confession of St. *Peter's*. Who if he were the only Person that at this time understood this secret, then the *Quire of the Apostles* (as *Basil* calls them, when he speaks of their Ignorance) had less knowledge of the Saviour of the World, than the *Host* of unclean Spirits. Which we cannot affirm without the greatest reproach to them; they having been so long under our Saviours Discipline, and seen his Power over those Spirits; nay, received Power themselves from him, as it there follows, *to heal Sickneses, and to cast out Devils*, Mark iii. 15.

(c) *L. vi. in
Luc. cap. 9.*

(d) *In Gal. ii.
2.*

But I need not laboriously enlarge upon this Argument. St. *Ambrose* saith (c) expressly, they all knew, what St. *Peter* alone spake. And St. *Chrysostom* himself is of the same mind, when he makes him here the *Mouth* of all; and elsewhere (d) saith, he was their *Tongue*, and answered for them all; which he could not have done, if he had not known they were all of his belief. And therefore we can learn nothing in this matter, from such Doctors as *Bellarmino*, but that they are resolved to affirm any thing, to maintain their unjust Pretences. The ambitious claim of the Bishop of *Rome*, must by all means be supported; else they would not prostitute their Consciences, and their Reputations too, in this manner, by asserting things which are so apparently untrue, that the smallest skill in the Holy Scripture, is sufficient to confute them.

But

But of all the accounts of this Confession of St. Peter, there is none so unaccountable, as that of Cardinal *Baronius*; who without the least Syllable in all Antiquity to countenance it, adventures to say, That now St. Peter Defined, Decreed, and made a Rule of Faith for all the World: For he fancies our Blessed Saviour now to have held a Council with his Disciples; in which St. Peter (e) Decreed and Constituted the Canon of Faith, for ever to endure. So that there was no need, saith he, our Saviour should consult the rest of the Apostles (though the Text saith expressly he askt them all, *Whom say ye that I am*)? What their Opinion was; it being sufficient that Peter had spoken (f); and so struck the nail to the head; that he had settled what was to be thought of Faith. Which is such an astonishing Instance of the Power of Prejudice, Passions of all sorts, and worldly Interest, to corrupt and pervert the wisest Minds, that it ought to be an admonition to us all, to employ the strictest Care, to discharge all these, when we are seeking after Truth, that they may not frame our Opinion for us. For how could such a Thought as this, without a strange Bias upon his Mind, enter into any Mans head? Or if it did, how could it stay there? or how should he be perswaded to publish such an absurdity to the Christian World? Is it credible, that in the Company where the Lord Jesus, the Eternal Son of God was present, any person, though never so great, should take upon him

(e) *Ad Annum*
33. N. xvii.

talem fert sen-

sentium, ut

erudiat atque

decernat, ac

fidei Canonem

perpetuo per

manjurum

constituat.

(f) *Acquid de*

fide sensen-

dum esset,

clavam fixis-

se. Ibid.

him to teach, nay to make an Article of Faith; St. Peter certainly was no Master in this Assembly, but a Scholar only; not an Instructor, but a Learner of Religion at this time, and in this place. Much less was he a Supreme Lawgiver, and a Judge of Truth (of which as yet he had not much Knowledge, it appears by what follows in this Chapter, where we read he so opposed our Saviour in another great point of Faith, that he calls him *Satan*); but barely pronounced what he had been taught to believe by our Lord himself; and had heard, as I have shewn from *John the Baptist*; and seen proved by such mighty Works, as none could do but God alone.

If I seem to have stood too long in explaining this Confession, let those who think so, consider, that it was to open the clearer passage to all the rest that follows; which will be the more plainly and easily understood. Particularly the next words of the Evangelist, who tells us, that upon this Confession of St. Peter, our Lord answered and said unto him, *Blessed art thou Simon Barjona; for flesh and blood (that is, man) hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in Heaven*, v. 17. In which words he pronounces them all happy men; this not being revealed peculiarly unto him, but unto the whole Company; who were all taught of God, by such means as I have named, as much as he. For if Peter were their Mouth, then as you have heard, his Confession was their common voice in answer to a question put to them all; and by the same

same reason, our Saviours reply to him, was the pronouncing a Blessing on them all; who in him had made this worthy Confession, and thereby demonstrated their proficiency in his School. In one regard indeed St. Peter was more happy than the rest; that as he was the first in the Colledge of the Apostles, so he had the Honour, as you shall hear, to be the first employed in that glorious work unto which they were all chosen as much as he; and in which they so laboured, that they were partakers no less than himself in that *Blessedness*, which is elsewhere pronounced to that faithful and wise servant, whom his Lord hath made ruler over his household, &c. *Matth. xxvi. 45; 46.* Which words (g) *Bellesmin* hath the confidence to apply peculiarly to St. Peter and the *Roman* Bishop, but directly against the sense of the Ancient Fathers, whom he was bound by solemn Oath to follow, who (as a learned Man *h* of the *Roman* Communion hath largely proved) understand hereby every faithful Pastor in the Church of Christ.

(g) *Lib. ii. de Concil. c. 17.*

h. Fo. Launoy Epist. ad Remundum Formentinum pars 2.

Who according to the way and method of the Divine Counsels, which is to give unto those that have, to bestow more on those who make a good use of what they have already received, immediately hereupon opens to the Apostles his purpose of gathering a Church; and drawing more disciples to him besides themselves, who should perpetually keep and preserve this Confession; and withal declares; that he would use Peter as an eminent instrument in this great undertaking: *καὶ γὰρ ἐγὼ καὶ ἡ ἐκκλησία* and I also, or moreover say unto thee; beside what I have

I have said already, I tell thee further, *Thou art Peter, and upon this Rock I will build my Church.*

His Speech is directed to *Peter*, but it is evident from what hath been said, that in him he comprehends all the Apostles; as they were all comprehended in his Confession; Who knew already, that he was *Christ, the Son of the Living God*; but did not understand his intention of gathering a Church by their means.

This Name of *Peter* we met withal before (*Matth. x. 2.*) being given him at his first coming to our Saviour, *John i. 42.* Where he told him, *Thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation a stone, or Peter*: Concerning which *Justin Martyr* (*a*) hath this Excellent Observation, That it was to show our Saviour was the very same God, who in the beginning had given new Names to *Abraham* and *Sarah*, to *Jacob* and *Joshua*. And for the same reason he called other two Disciples by the name of *Boanerges*; to signify that he had the same Authority, by which names were anciently changed; and that he was their Lord and Sovereign, of which the imposing a name on any person was a mark: So that the Words of our Saviour in this place, are to be understood, as if he had said, *Thou art he, to whom when thou first camest to me, I gave a new Name, and called Peter, a Stone, and truly my Church shall be built on a bottom as firm as any stone, or rock.*

(a) *Dialog. cum Tryb.* p. 333.
334. See also
Tertullian L.
iv. adv. Marcionem c. 13.

It was the custom of our Lord, when he was about to declare any Divine Truth, to lay hold on some sensible similitude, then near at hand, the better to represent it to the minds of those that heard him. As discoursing with the Woman of *Samarita* at the Well-side, he takes occasion to tell her of *living water*, that he had to bestow upon her: Such as should be in those that drank it, *a well of water springing up into everlasting life*, John IV. 10, 14. And at another time, feeding a Multitude miraculously with a few Barly Loaves and Fishes, he thence lays hold of the opportunity to discourse of the *bread of life which came down from heaven*: which he admonishes them to labour after, because *if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever*, John VI. 26, 27, 50, 51. In like manner here, from the Name he had given *Peter*, he takes the occasion of representing the steadfastness of that Foundation, on which his Church should be built; saying, *on this rock will I build my Church*.

There was something in *Peter*, no doubt, which was the motive to the bestowing this Name upon him: and that was the forwardness of his Faith; which carried him to Christ, meerly upon the report which his Brother *Andrew* gave of him. Which was the reason, *S. Gregory Nyssen* thinks, that though *Abraham's* Name was not changed, till after long acquaintance with God, and many Divine Apparitions to him; *Peter's* was changed at the very first

sight of our Saviour: he at the same time hearing his Brother, and believing on the Lamb of God, was consummated by Faith, and *being knit*

* *Πεσσευις* to the rock (viz. Christ) was made Peter *.

τῇ πέτρᾳ Πέ-

τρος ἐψηίστο.

Hom. XV. in

Cantic. Cant-

corum, p. 691.

For our Lord intended to imploy him (though not him alone) as an eminent instrument, to bring others to the Faith; and build them on the same Rock, that he himself was built, till they became a Church.

The word CHURCH signifies, the whole company of Believers, united unto Christ, as their Lord and Master: who are here compared to a House.

The *building* of this Church is nothing else, but the joyning these Persons with their Pastors, into Company and Society one with another; in such good order, as the Stones, which make an House, are laid in, upon their Foundation.

All the difficulty is about the *Rock*, or the Foundation, upon which this Society stands; and, by holding fast to which, it remains a Church. Which is the *second* thing I undertook to treat of; unto which I now proceed.

PART II.

What is here meant by the Rock.

Concerning this, there are various expositions, among the ancient Fathers; as is manifest to every one that hath read their Writings: though in truth (as you shall see before I have done) they differ rather in words, than in sense; and quite overthrow all the pretensions of the Church of *Rome* from this place of Holy Scripture. I will name four.

I. It is confessed by all *Protestants*, that some of the ancient Fathers, by the *Rock* do understand *Peter*. No Body, that I know of, disputes about this: but only about their meaning, when they say he was this Rock on which Christ said he would build his Church. Which undoubtedly is not such, as they of the Church of *Rome* would have it; because other Persons, far more in number, and of as eminent rank in the Christian Church, expound it of the *Faith* which *S. Peter* confessed. So that he was the Rock and the Foundation, only as he preached this Faith; which is the second interpretation, and shall be made appear to be the meaning of those, who call *Peter* the Foundation of the Church.

II. If numbers are to be followed, there are most I am sure for this sense of these words; that by the Rock we are to understand, *that faith which S. Peter now confessed*. It is mentioned by Fortunatus an African Bishop, in a Council at Carthage *, where he saith, the Lord hath built his Church, *Supra petram, non super heresin*, upon a Rock, not upon Heresie. In which words Rock being opposed to Heresie; without all doubt, he understood our Saviour to speak of a sound and solid Faith in him, when he said he would build his Church upon this Rock. Which is exactly the sense of Epiphanius also, who by the Gates of Hell understanding all sorts of Heresies, adds immediately †, *but they cannot prevail against the Rock, that is, against the Truth*. To whom I could add Sixteen other ancient Writers (and not put S. Austin into the number, who often follows this Exposition) four of which were Popes of Rome *: and I do not reckon neither, Isidorus Hispalensis, venerable Bede, and a great many other excellent Writers, later than they, down to Alphonsus Tostatus, and lower: among whom are five or six Bishops of Rome †, who expressly say, The Rock that Christ here speaks of, is the Faith which Peter confessed. For the Church, saith the last named Writer, *is built upon faith: which faith is called a rock; because it always remains firm and solid*.

III. But there are others of no less name and credit, that understand Christ himself, by this Rock. Who then may be conceived to have pointed

* De Baptizandis Hæreticis apud Cyprilian. p. 233. edit. Oxon.

† Αλλὰ καὶ
καὶ πῶς ἡ
ἐκτίσθη,
καὶ τίς ἡ
καὶ ἀνδρεία.
Hæref.

LXXIV. n. 14.
* Leo I. Felix M. Gregorius I. Adrian I.

† Nicholas I. John VIII. Steph. VI. Innocent II. Hadrian IV. Urban III.

pointed to his own person, when he spake these words; shewing by his voice and gesture, whom he meant by *this Rock*: Which as it is an elegant, so it is no unusual form of Speech; but made use of by our Lord himself, on another occasion (*Joh. II. 19.*) when he saith, *destroy this Temple* (intending the Temple of his Body) *and in three days I will raise it up.* And there are no small number of the antient Doctors who thus expound these words; particularly S. *Austin* in divers places of his Works, as he himself takes notice in his *Review* of them. Where he saith † that in a certain place of his Book against the Epistle of *Donatus*, he made *Peter* the Rock on which the Church was founded; but since that time, had *very often* said, it was *Christ the Son of the living God*. He leaves the Reader, indeed, to chuse which he pleases: but any one may see he inclined to the last; which he followed in those Books which he wrote after this of his *Retractions*. For which I must needs say there are no small reasons, that are worthy to be mentioned.

† *Retractions. L. 1. c. 21.*

First, this very Apostle (whose name is *Peter*, or *Stone*) calls Christ a *living stone*, *unto whom ye coming* (saith he to his flock) *as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, &c.* 1 *Pet. II. 4, 5.* Who can read these words without prejudice, and not think that S. *Peter* lookt upon Christ as that Rock, on whom every one must be built, who will be a part of the spiritual House; that is, of the Church? And therefore he adds, that:

that Christ is that *chief Corner Stone*, *elect and precious*, whom the Prophet *Isaiah* foretold, God would *lay in Sion*. (v. 6.) And Christ alone: for if he had had any conceit, that he was a joynt, secondary foundation of this building, it would have been very seasonable, or rather necessary, to have bidden his flock *come to him*, as that *chief Corner Stone*, which God of old predicted he would lay in *Sion*, as the foundation of his Church, together with Christ.

* Prefat. ad
Libros de
Guanmo Pontif.

For so *Bellarmin* † is bold to expound that Prophecy of *Isaiah*; endeavouring at large to prove that every particular there mentioned, belongs to *Peter*, and his Successors in the See of *Rome*: who, he saith, are that *tried Stone*, that *precious*, nay that *corner Stone*, that *sure foundation*, in *fundamento fundatus* (as they translate it) that *stone laid in the foundation*, which we read of *Isaiah* XXVIII. 16. Directly against the words of *S. Peter* himself, who applys all this to *Christ* alone; and endeavours to fasten his flock unto him, as the only sure Rock of their Redemption and Salvation.

This is a Doctrine frequent in the mouth of this very Apostle (whom against his own mind, they will needs make the Foundation of the Church) and which he had read in other places of the antient Prophets. For, long before the writing of this Epistle, he tells the Council of *Jerusalem*, that *Jesus* was the *stone* which was set at naught by such Builders as they, but become the head of the Corner: *Act.*

IV. 11. The great Men, that is, of the Jewish Church would not build on this Foundation, by joyning themselves unto him, as the rest of the Stones in a House, are to that of the Corner : and so they excluded themselves from his Body, and from Salvation ; for *there is no Salvation, saith he, in any other.*

Secondly, Another great Apostle also tells us, that Christ is the Rock, *1 Corinth. X. 4.* Who poured out his Spirit, after his Death, upon the Church ; as the Rock in the Wilderness, after it was smitten, did Water for the *Israelites.*

Thirdly, And more than that, he tells us in that Epistle III. 11. *Other foundation can no Man lay, than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.* How is it possible to have a better interpreter of Christs words to Peter, than this which is here given us, by the great Apostle of us Gentiles. There are sundry *Elogiums* indeed which the ancient Fathers have bestowed on S. Peter, in their writings ; of which they of the Church of *Rome* are wont to boast : and we grant them all ; nay, have often told them, that if it will do them any service, we will furnish them with as many more titles of Honour, out of the Fathers, as they have collected. But when we have done ; we will present them with as many, and great, and transcendent, yea the very same, titles bestowed upon S. Paul : Who here tells us in plain words whom we are to understand by the *Foundation* of the Church, and consequently by the *Rock*, on which
it

it is built. And indeed our Saviour doth not here say to *Peter, Thou art Peter, and upon thee will I build my Church*; but *upon this Rock*: as if he spoke of something else; either himself, or that *Faith* concerning him, which *Peter* had confessed. *Tu Petrus, Ego Petra*, thou art *Peter*, and I am the *Rock*, on whom thou art built thyself, and must help to build others. If *Peter* himself was the *Rock*, then how is he built upon the *Rock*? He would be a *Rock* and a *Foundation* to himself: For there is no mention of more *Rocks* than one; which if it be *Christ*, then *Peter* and all must be built on him.

* Serm. 13.
De verbis
Domini Cap.
1, 2.

Hear how handsomely *S. Austin* * expounds these words, *Thou therefore art Peter, and upon this Rock, which thou hast confessed, upon this Rock which thou hast known, saying, Thou art Christ the Son of the living God, I will build my Church. Super me ædificabo te, non me super te. I will build thee upon me, not me upon thee. For they that would build upon men, said, I am of Paul, I am of Apollo, I am of Cephas, that is Peter: and others who would not be built upon Peter, but upon the Rock, said, I am of Christ. Now S. Paul seeing them make choice of him, and contemn Christ, asks them, Is Christ divided? Was Paul Crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? No, neither in Paul's, nor in Peter's, but in the name of Christ; that Peter might be built upon the Rock, not the Rock upon Peter.*

The

The like we meet withal in another place †. † *Tract. CXXXIV. in evang. Johannis.*
 The Church is founded upon the Rock, whence Peter received his Name. For the Rock is not denominated from Peter, but Peter from the Rock, * as Christ hath not his name from Christian, but a Christian from Christ : for therefore the Lord said, Upon this Rock I will build my Church, because Peter had said, Thou art Christ the Son of the living God. Upon this Rock therefore, saith he, which thou hast confessed, will I build my Church. **FOR THE ROCK WAS CHRIST :** upon which foundation, even Peter himself is built. For other foundation can no Man lay, than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus.

* Non enim à Petro Petrus, sed Petrus à Petra : directly contrary to Card. Baronius, who confidently says, non Petrus à Petra, sed ipse Petrus ; not Peter from that Rock, but he is the Rock. Ad An. 31. n. 24.
 † In Cap. XXI. Johan.

I will not trouble you with any more Authorities, such as that of Venerable Bede †, who hath transcribed these last words of S. Austin into his own Book : because I have a fourth exposition to add, which will help to clear the rest, especially the first.

IV. There are those, who having what I have now said in their mind, expound these words of all the Apostles and their Successors ; that is, of all Christian Bishops : who laid this foundation stone, and continued to build upon it after it was laid. Thus S. Cyprian* most expressly : Our Lord whose precepts we ought to reverence and observe, ordering the honour of the Bishop, and the rule of his Church, saith in the Gospel unto Peter, I say unto thee, thou art Peter, and upon this Rock, &c. From hence, through the course of times and successions, runs down the Ordination of Bishops, and the rule of the Church :

* Ad Laod. Epist. XXXIII. Edit. Oxon.

E

THAT

THAT THE CHURCH MAY BE
CONSTITUTED UPON BISHOPS;
and every affair of the Church be governed, by those
Overseers. The very same is affirmed by S. Austin
who in several places, looks upon the whole or-
der of Bishops as comprehended in S. Peter :
particularly in an Epistle to three † great persons ;
where he saith, Christ spake these words to him,
sustaining the figure of the whole Church. It will not
be fit to mention all the rest of the antient Writers
who thus extend the sense of this place : I shall
only note that Paschasius Radbertus, the founder of
Transubstantiation, was of this mind. For thus
he writes *, *The Church of God is not built upon Pe-
ter alone ; but upon all the Apostles, and the Suc-
cessors of the Apostles.*

† Epist.
CLXV. vide
Lamouii Epist.
Par. V. ad
Carolus Ma-
gisium p. 47.
Sec. & ad Gu-
lielm. Voellum,
p. 12. Sec.

* L. IV. in
Matt. v. 26. p.
18.

Unto these four Expositions, I might add a
fifth, there being those who have understood every
Christian Man and Woman, by *this Rock* ; they
being the stones and materials, as I may call them,
of which the Church consists. But I will pass
this by, though it have more great names to sup-
port it, besides Origen : because I have said enough
already to expose the foul dealing, and unworthy
reasonings and conclusions of greatest Doctors of
the Church of Rome ; which I shall represent in
these following Considerations.

PART III.

*Reflections upon what hath been said concerning
these Interpretations.*

I.

IF these things be certainly true, as I assure you they are, and themselves cannot deny, that there are these several interpretations of this Scripture, among the ancient Doctors; then there can be no excuse made for their partiality, who receive, and adhere only to one of these interpretations, as the Catholick Exposition, and lay aside all the rest even those which are far more Catholick. Thus doth *Bellarmino* *; who finding fault with *Erasmus* for contradicting their Exposition of the Church being founded upon *Peter*, saith that *all the Fathers teach it*. And thus doth Cardinal *Baronius* † (to name no more) who is not ashamed to say, that it is an interpretation *received and approved by the consent of the whole Catholick Church*.

* *L. 1. de Pontif. Rom. C. X.*

† *Ad Av. 33. n. XXVII.*

What truth can you expect from such Men, or who can think it safe to give up himself to the conduct of such Guides; who thus notori-

ously false in a matter so evident, that for one ancient Father or Ecclesiastical Writer, that by the Rock understands *Peter* himself, there are two, nay very near three, that interpret it, of the *Faith* which *S. Peter* confessed? For to all those, which a very learned and ingenuous Doctor of the Roman Church hath collected, (which are XLIV. in number *) others may be added, besides *Fortunatus* and *Epiphanius* before mentioned. For example, *Euagrius* seems to have had this in his thoughts, who speaking of *Anastasi-us* Bishop of *Antioch* (where *S. Peter* sat before he was at *Rome*), to whom such fierce assaults were given, as if they thought in his overthrow, to subvert the Church it self, saith, he manfully withstood them all; † for he stood firm upon the impregnable Rock of Faith.

If the sense of the Antients be to be revered at all, why not one sense as well as another? And why not that most of all, which hath the most to assert it? With what conscience do they fix upon one, and throw away, nay detest all the other, which are of more credit? Is it not highly unjust to make *Peter* this Rock here spoken of, rather than Christ our Lord, when there are so many reasons, as well as great Authority, for the last, more than for the other? And yet they not only do this, but most immodestly say, all the Fathers are of their mind.

* V. Jo. Launoii
Epist. P. V.
ad Guil. Voet-
lium, p. 18. &c.

† ἐν τῷ
ἀπρόκλιτον πῶ-
τον εἰς ἡμέ-
ρας μέσους.
L. IV. C. 40.

And,

And which is worse, they make this an Article of the Faith, That the Church is founded upon *S. Peter*, nay the prime Article of all; unto which it is evident the Church hath never agreed, but manifestly contradicted it.

Upon this *Bellarmino* grounds the Infallibility of the Bishop of Rome; because *Peter is the Rock, and the Foundation of the Church, as the Supreme Governor of it; and therefore every Successor of his, is in like manner, the Rock and Foundation of the Church.* And thus he saith all the *Fathers have expounded it* *. And hence proceeds so far, as to say, this is *the summ of Christian affairs* †: the whole frame of the visible Church depending so much upon the *Roman Bishop*, that if he be taken away, the Church falleth.

* L. IV. de Pontif. Rom. C. III.
† Præfat. in illos Libros.

Upon this Foundation also they have raised to him such an Authority, they make him, by Christ's Institution, the *Monarch of the Church* *: and consequently above the whole Church; above General Councils; the Supreme Judge of Controversies, who can be judged by none, and I know not how many other extravagancies.

* Baron. ad An. 53. n XX.

And to make all this indubitable, some have had the confidence, against the sense of all Antiquity, to translate these words thus, † *Thou art Peter, and upon this Peter I will build my Church.* Which Translation, though the *Rheims* have not put in the Text of their *English Testament*, (as a great Doctor among them would have

† Jo. Hart. confer. with Doct. Reynolds, p. 22.

have had them done) yet they maintain in their *Annotations* that they who translate out of *Hebrew*, *Syriack* or *Greek*, ought to have so translated it : not observing that they herein condemn their own *authentick Latin*, which hath done otherwise.

But when Men are bent to serve a Cause, right or wrong, they cannot but thus contradict themselves, as well as the ancient Fathers. Whose authority they pretend to reverence ; but when it is against them, make so bold with it, as not only to reject, but to endeavour utterly to destroy it. Thus they have ordered these words to be expunged out of a Sermon of *S. Chrysostom's* *, though I have shown they are most Catholick, *the Church is not built upon the man, but upon his Faith.*

* *Serm. in Pentecost. in his Works printed at Basil.*

† *Baronius ad An. 33. n. XXI. Bellarm. de Pontif. Rom. L. 1. C. X.*

After all which confidence it is no wonder if they proceed to such a height of boldness, as to call those *Innovators*, and *Hereticks* ; nay *shameless Innovators*, and *impudent Hereticks* † ; who interpret this place not of *Peter*, but of *Christ*, or the *Faith* which *Peter* confessed. I will not imitate their ill Language ; though it might most justly be returned upon them : For their opinion, who make *Faith* the Rock (as the *Lutherans* commonly do) is so far from Novelty, that it hath the most Antiquity, among which *seven* or *eight* Popes of *Rome*, on its side : and they who say *Christ* is the Rock (as the followers of *Mr. Calvin* commonly do) are back'd also with the Authority of ancient * Do-

* *Such as S. Hierom, S. Austin, Theodoret, &c.*

ctors,

ctors, among whom are some Popes; particularly *Innocent the Third*, who mentioning these words, saith, *Christ himself is both the Founder, and the Foundation of the Church* †.

† Serm. 2. de
Consecr. Pont.

How then can they be said to have lost their modesty, who say nothing; but what the greatest Men in the Church of Christ have said before them? And what Character do they deserve, who, notwithstanding this unquestionable evidence against it, not only affirm that *Peter* is meant by the Rock; but that this is the proper, and, as one may say, the immediate, and literal sense * of the words: and hath the consent of the whole Church, both of the Greek and of the Latin Fathers?

* Bellarm.
L. 1. C. X.
de R. Pont.

But that which aggravates all this guilt is still behind; that they thus expound the place, directly against the Decree of the Council of Trent, and that *Profession of Faith* which every Priest solemnly makes; wherein he promises, *he will never understand and interpret the Scriptures, but according to the unanimous consent of the Fathers* *. Now it's as clear, as that there are such Fathers, that they most unanimously consent in that interpretation which these Men contradict; and that there are but few, in comparison, who agree in that which they assert for the proper sense of the place.

* Bulla Pii IV.
super forma
juramenti pro-
fessionis fidei.

Think

Think seriously of such things as these, and you will not be moved from your steadfastness, by the confidence of those, who bear the World in hand; that they alone hold the ancient Apostolick Catholick Faith, according to the exposition of the ancient Doctors. It is meer pretence; for in their Exposition of our Saviour's Words, they chuse that which is least Catholick; and more than that, they make that which is least Catholick, to be a Principal point of the Catholick Faith.

If this be not the highest degree of partiality; it is because they themselves exceed it in what follows.

II.

They cannot but know, that those very Persons in the ancient Church, who by the Rock understand *Peter*, meant no more, than they do, who understand thereby *Christ* himself, or *Faith* in him. For these are not really *three* different senses; but, in effect, no more than *one*: The ancient Doctors using *only a diversity of speech, not of opinion*, as *S. Austin* was wont to say. Which appears most manifestly in this, that the very same Person uses these words promiscuously, sometimes *Peter*, sometimes his *Faith*, sometimes *Christ*. *S. Hilary* * for instance, is often quoted for this saying, (*speaking of S. Peter*) *O happy Foundation of the Church!* But the same *Hilary* says in another place

* Can. XVI.
in *Matth.*

place, *This Faith is the Foundation of the Church* †; and in another, *This is the one happy Rock of Faith, confessed by Peter's Mouth, Thou art the son of the living God* *. These sayings ought, in Justice, to be taken notice of, as much as the first: but then *Peter*, in his opinion, was no such Foundation as they would have; unless the good Father be supposed to contradict himself. In like manner *S. Chrysostom*, who upon these words **ON THIS ROCK**, makes the sense to be (as he doth in many other places) upon the Faith which he confessed; upon the very next Verse, expounds the words thus, *Thou art Peter, and upon thee I will build my Church*.

† L. VI. de Trinitate.

* L. II. de Trin.

Shall we think that so great a Man did, in one and the same breath, as I may say, forget and contradict himself? and not rather expound the later words by the former; that by *upon Peter* he still meant *upon the Faith* that *Peter* then confessed, and afterward preached? *Pope Leo* the First also, who in his Epistle to *Leo Augustus*, says *Peter* is the Rock; in four other places, interprets it of his *Faith*. *S. Cyprian* likewise, I have shown, expounds it of all the Bishops and Pastors of the Church, as well as of *S. Peter*. And *S. Austin* expounds it all the four ways before-mentioned, of *Peter*, of *Christ*, of *Faith*, and of all the *Apostles*.

What shall we say then? Did not these great Doctors know their own mind? Were they wavering and unsettled in their Opinions; not know-

ing what to determine? They were not such Children in understanding: but by these various forms of Speech have plainly told us, That when they say *Peter* is the Rock, they did not mean his Person, much less him only; but his Doctrine which he preached, which was also preached as much by others. Just as when we bid one read *Tully* or *Virgil*; we mean their Works which they have left us.

The reason of all which is nothing else but this; that the Church is built upon Christ, by *Faith* in him, which was professed and preached by *Peter*, and by the rest of the *Apostles*. *Christ* is in proper speaking, the Rock and the Foundation, upon which the whole Church relies. *Peter* was an eminent Minister of his, and so were the other *Apostles*, to lay this Foundation: that is, to Preach, and declare him to the World, and perswade Men to believe on him; upon whom they themselves were built, as their Foundation. They first believed on him: and then were co-workers with him, to bring others to the Faith: and lastly, after they were dead, that Faith which they confessed and taught, still remained to be preached by their Successors, in all Ages, as the Doctrine on which we must stand, and to which we must hold, if we intend to be owned by Christ, as Members of his Church.

So all these Expositions agree very well; and do not cross one another: for when the Fathers use sometimes one word, sometimes another, they still mean the same thing. If they say, *S. Pe-*

ter is the Rock, they mean only as a Minister that laid the Foundation-stone; and then so was S. Paul too, who calls himself, a *chief Master-builder*. If they say, *Faith* is the Rock, they mean a belief of this Doctrine that Jesus is *the Son of the living God*: which is the first Principle of the Christian Religion. And if they say the *faithful* are the Rock (for so some of them have spoken) they mean that being built upon this Faith in Christ, they also profess, maintain, and support it. For, in effect, as I said, all these Interpretations meet in one: *Christ* being the Principal cause of all; *Peter* a Ministerial or Instrumental cause, by preaching Christ, while he lived, and perswading Men to joyn themselves to him, and become a Church: and their *belief* of that which he, and the rest of the Apostles preached concerning Christ Jesus, was both then and after they were dead, the means whereby they were joyned to Christ. He and the Doctrine concerning him, was the Foundation, upon which all were built; by the Ministry of *Peter* and his fellow *Apostles*, who squared and fastened Men unto this *living Stone*: upon whom being settled by Faith in him, they became themselves *living Stones*, (as S. Peter speaks in the place before-mentioned) and were *built up a Spiritual House*, or Temple, an *Holy Priesthood*, to offer up *Spiritual Sacrifices*, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

I will conclude this with an excellent saying of S. Chrysostom*; who speaking of S. Paul, and

*^v Οταν Παυ-
λον εἶπον, ὅ
Χριστὸν ἀγάπα,
&c.

what he had preach'd and done, says, *When I mention Paul, it is as if I had said, Christ himself.* For Christ moved and inspired that blessed Soul; Christ spake by him, and his Voice was the Voice of Christ. Which I may fitly apply to the present matter, and say as truly of *S. Peter*; when he is named, Christ is named and nothing else is meant, but that upon him, that is upon Christ preached by him, or speaking in him, the Church should be built. Thus, it is certain, *Tertullian* understood *these* words; which he thus interprets: *the Church is built on him, that is by him* †. But not on him (that is by him) alone.

† In ipso Ecclesia exstructa est; id est per ipsum. *L. de pudicitia.*
C. XXI.



For that is a farther piece of injustice to make these words spoken only to *Peter*: who I have shown was the *mouth of the Apostles* in the confession he made, and spake the sense of them all; and therefore, in all reason, this reply of our Saviour's is to be thought intended to them all; who were as much Rocks or foundations of the Church, as he. For did not our Lord propound the question to them all, in those words, *whom do you say that I am?* v. 15. And if he askt them the question, did he not expect their Answer? Where then shall we find that Answer, unless the Foreman delivered in the sense of the whole Body: and in the name of the rest of his Brethren made this declaration, *Thou art Christ the Son of the living God?*
Which

Which is affirmed, I have told you, by *S. Austin* and others, who say, *Peter answers, one for all.* Now if they all made this confession, then they were all concerned in our Saviours reply : who tells him, and in him tells them, that upon this Rock, that is himself which they confessed, he would build his Church by their Ministry ; that is, by their constant preaching, what they had now confessed. And thus Venerable *Bede* our Countryman, understood this matter, in his Homily upon *S. Peter* ; where he hath these very words ; *Nam sicut interrogatis generaliter omnibus, &c.* For as when all were askt in general, who he was, *Peter* answered, one for all : So what our Lord answered to *Peter*, in *Petro omnibus respondit*, in *Peter* he answered to all the Apostles.

Thus even common reason taught Men to expound words, when it was not swayed by prejudice, interest, or any private affection. Which when we suffer to intermeddle, they prevent our judgment, and make strange glosses upon Gods word ; casting a mist before our eyes, when the light of divine truth clearly shines into them. An instance of which we have in the *Rhemists* Annotations on these words, who could not but see, that the *Fathers do some time say* (if they could have spoke out, they would have said, do very often, or rather most commonly say) *the Church is built on Peter's Faith* : But immediately, as if darkness had come on a sudden upon them, they add, the *Fathers meant not, that it should be*

be built upon Faith, either separate from the Man, or in any other Man (as we, they say, unlearnedly take them) but upon Faith, as in him, who here confessed that Faith. Which is as much as to say, the Church is built upon Peter's Faith alone; and not upon the same Faith, in any other Apostle. If this be Christian learning, it is very new: never thought of till of late; as will more fully appear in the following Considerations.

IV.

If we should grant that these words of Christ were spoken *only* to him; yet it is very unjust to understand them, *exclusively* of all the rest. For we may as well argue, that Christ intended S. Peter only should draw Men to him by preaching the Gospel (and so the rest of the Apostles have nothing to do) because he said to him alone, and not to James and John, who were his Partners, *Simon fear not, from henceforth thou shalt catch men*, Luke V. 10. as that he intended him alone to be the Rock, because he said only to him, *Thou art Peter*, &c. without any mention of the rest of the Apostles. Who ought not to be thought excluded, unless there had been some such word of restriction, as limited the sense to S. Peter only, and barred their claim to a joynt share in this grant: for the Church may be built on him, and on them too; he may be the Rock, and they also in the same sense that it is meant of him. And this

this appears to be true, from a great many things, that may be fit here to be observed.

1. *First*, the Apostles never thought themselves to be excluded; but by their behaviour declared they took themselves to be equal to him. Which *Alphonsus Tostatus* * (no longer ago than in the *Fifteenth Century*) asserts most earnestly, and, with great concern, alledges many undeniable arguments to prove, they did not understand any supremacy to have been given to *Peter* by these words. For after this, saith he, they contended for superiority, *disputing who should be the greatest.* Matth. XVIII. 1. Mark IX. 33. And again the two Sons of *Zebedee* (who always seemed to be equal with him in our Saviour's favour) have their desire of *preference* promoted by their Mother, Matth. XX. 10. &c. Nay, this dispute was renewed at his last Supper (as he understands Luke XXII. 24, 25.) concerning which his words are remarkable. Every Apostle, saith he, *doubted which of them should be the greater, and that doubt remained until the day of Christ's death: for in the last Supper of Christ, they began to inquire among themselves, which of them should seem the greater: and yet they would not have made this dispute publicly, if they had thought Peter, by the collating of the Keys, to have been preferred above them.*

* In Matth. XVIII. qu. VII. and in Matth. XX. qu. 83.

Thus far then they thought themselves equal, when they could not resolve which should be the greater.

2. And after our Lords Resurrection, and the coming

coming of the Holy Ghost, when they cannot be supposed ignorant of any thing concerning his Kingdom, they still took themselves, as much concerned in these words as *Peter*. For not only *S. Paul*, but *S. John*, a Man exceedingly beloved of our Saviour, and his beloved Disciple, thought all the Apostles to be the Foundation, on which the Church is built. Read at your leisure *Ephes. II. 20.* and *Revel. XXI. 14.* where you will find, the Wall of the New Jerusalem, that is the Christian Church, *had twelve Foundations, and in them the names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb*: Not one Foundation; and on that the name of *Peter*; but *twelve Foundations* bearing the name of the *twelve Apostles*. *Peter* was *unum, sed non unicum fundamentum*, one Foundation, but not the only one. He was one of the next stones, which lay immediately upon the Rock Christ, and so may be called a Foundation: but so was *S. John* also, another of those stones which immediately rely upon Christ: and so were all the rest of the Apostles: None of which were built upon *S. Peter*, nor he on them; but all on Christ: Whom *S. Austin* † calls *fundamentum fundamentorum*, the Foundation of the Foundations; that is of the very *Apostles and Prophets*; upon whom the Church is said to be built, because by their Ministry it was erected. In this sense *Peter* was a Rock; and so were all the rest of the Apostles as much as he: equal in power; alike intrusted with this great work, of raising a Church upon him the *living Stone*.

† In Psalm.
LXXXVII.

3. Whence it is, that St. *Paul* giving an account of the several Orders and Ranks of Men, which God hath placed in his Church, makes the highest Power in it, to be that which belongs unto them all: For he saith, *God hath set these in the Church, first Apostles, &c.* 1 Cor. 12. 28. He doth not say, *first Peter* (as he should have done, if by these words, *Thou art Peter, &c.* he was set higher than the rest) but the *Apostles* in general; who were all the prime Ministers of Christ, of equal Dignity among themselves, without any one set over them in Superiority above the rest.

4. Which appears farther, from the Promise of bestowing *the Keys* upon him (which here immediately follows, *Vers.* 19. and is acknowledged on all sides, to be the highest Power conferred upon him) which is promised to all the Apostles in the very next Chapter, *Matth.* 18. 18. in the very same words, without any alteration, but only a change of the singular into the plural. Here it is said, *Whatsoever thou shalt bind on Earth, &c.* there, *Whatsoever ye shall bind on Earth, &c.* What reason then to fancy any difference between them? Which the ancient Christians did not, but look'd upon them all as having a joynt share in this Power: Which is so evident, that a Learned Man (*1*) in the Roman Communion, hath shown at large, even by the Confession of Popes themselves, that in *Peter* Christ gave the Keys, or rather promised them, to the whole Church.

(1) Joh. Landon Epist. ad Hadrianum Vallantium, p. 275, &c. P. 4. 2.

5 And the truth is, Nothing was here given to him by these words of Christ [*Thou art Peter*]

G

with

with respect to the *Apostles*, but with respect to the *Church* only; which was raised by the joynt Labour and Pains of the whole Number. To whom another being afterwards added, *he laboured more abundantly than they all*, 1 Cor. 15. 10.

6. And was so far from thinking he had any Superiour (though he was chosen last of all, and look'd upon himself as a kind of Abortive, 1 Cor. 15. 8.) that he doubted not to say, *He was not a whit (in nothing) behind the very chiefest of the Apostles*; 2 Cor. 11. 5. & 12. 11. The words

(m) οἱ ὑπερ-
ἀλλαν ἀπίστοι
are very significant in the Greek (m), implying there were more *very eminent*, or *super-excellent* Apostles than one; called in other places *Pillars*,

(n) οἱ δοκῶν-
τες.
Gal. 2. 9. and Chiefs (n), *ib. vers. 2, 6.* Peter no doubt was *one* of these, but there were *others* as eminent: and neither he nor they had a Pre-eminence of Power and Authority among them, there being nothing wanting in *St. Paul*, to make him equal to the *most Eminent Apostles*.

7. Particularly to *St. Peter*, with whom he contended, openly opposing and reprehending his Error, (*Gal. 2. 11.*) which he durst not have done, if he had known any Superiority, in Power and Authority, to have been in *St. Peter*. Nay, here had been a fit occasion for *St. Peter* to have asserted his Authority (if he had known any to have been in him, which was not in *St. Paul*) and not have suffered himself to be thus corrected by him for his Error. Of which we have not one word; nor *did he, the one Lord chose him first, and built his Church upon him, challenge to him-
self*

self any thing insolently, or arrogantly; so as to say, he had the Primacy, and therefore ought rather to be obeyed by those who were novel and later Persons. They are the words of St. Cyprian (o), who plainly hereby declares his sense to have been, that these words of our Lord to St. Peter, gave him no such Primacy, as set him above Correction; that is, no Supremacy, or Dominion; and that it had been an insolent and arrogant thing, if he had assumed to himself any such Primacy.

(o) Epist. lxxi. edit. Rigal. whose Notes there a. f. are worth perusing.

8. For the Fathers, it must be next observed, never understood these words *exclusively*; but call all the Apostles by the very same names of Honour and Dignity that they do Peter; and other Bishops afterwards by the same Names that they do the Bishop of Rome. For Example, I find one called *Father of Fathers*, another *Bishop of Bishops*; nay, all of them called *Vicarios Christi*, the Vicars of Christ, whose place they here supplied. Which Eminent Title the Popes of Rome heretofore, were so far from appropriating to themselves, that, as their common Title was *Vicars of St. Peter*, not *Vicars of Christ*, so this last they themselves have honoured other Bishops withal, as whole Councils have also done; who exhort the People to honour the Governours and Pastors of Churches, as *Fathers*, and *Christ's Vicars* (p). But that perhaps, which will be thought most to the purpose, is this: That as St. Chrysostome (q) in his Sermon upon those blessed pair, as he calls them, St. Peter, and St. Paul, gives them alike Titles, and says, God trusted them with the

(p) V. Joh. Lanotii par. 3. Epistol. ad Michaellem Marollium, p. 21, &c. & n. 36.

(q) Tom. v. p. 992. & 995. Edit. Savil.

Souls of the whole World; so, speaking of all the Twelve Apostles, he calls them expressly in the singular Number, *the Rock, or Foundation of the Church*. Thus, I shew'd before, St. Cyprian also discourses, when he saith from these words of our Saviour, is derived all the Power of Bishops and Governours in the Church, who successively ordain Pastors; *that the Church may be constituted upon Bishops*. To whom I will only add *Theodore*, upon that known place in the *Psalms*, lxxxvii. 1. *His Foundation is in the Holy Mountains*; which, in the spiritual Sense, being meant of the New Jerusalem, he thus expounds. *The Foundations of Piety are the Divine Instructions* which Christ hath given us: *the Holy Mountains, upon whom he hath laid these Foundations, are the Apostles of our Saviour*: Who are thence called themselves Foundations, because they laid the Foundation of Christianity by the Divine Instructions, which they gave from Christ; according to that of St. Paul, which he immediately adds, *Ye are built upon the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Christ himself being the chief Corner-Stone*.

9. And therefore, when the Fathers treat of this very matter, they give other reasons why Christ named *Peter* only when he spake these words; not to give him any Prerogative, much less Monarchy; but to signify the Unity he would have in his Church. This St. Cyprian discourses of at large, in words as express as can be desired. * Christ said to *Peter*, Upon this Rock

'I

'I will build my Church; and tho he gave to all
'his Apostles, after his Resurrection, *parem Po-*
'*testatem*, equal Power; yet, *ut Unitatem mani-*
'*festaret*, that he might declare the Unity he
'would have; he spake first to him alone, that
'on him he would build his Church. Not mak-
ing him by these words, it is plain, the Impe-
rial Head of the Church, but only a representa-
tive Type of its Unity. For he immediately
adds, *The rest of the Apostles were the very same*
that Peter was, endued with equal Co-partnership
both of Honour and of Power; but the beginning
proceeds from Unity, that the Church of Christ may
be shewed to be one (r). And a little after he con-
siders all the *Bishopricks in the World as one Mass*
or Lump, whereof every Bishop in the World hath
an intire part. The like I might add out of Pope
Symmachus himself, in a Letter to the Bishop of
Arles (s), where he acknowledges, that as *the*
power of the Holy Trinity is one, and undivided; so
there is one Bishoprick amongst divers Bishops. But I
have not room for more Authorities of this kind.

(r) De Uni-
te Ecclesie
Cathol. edit.
Rigalt. p. 180.
Episcopus
unus est, cujus
à singulis in so-
lidum pars te-
netur.

(s) Baronad
An. 499. num.
xxxvi.

I will rather observe, That there is another
plainer reason of Christ's speaking thus to St. Pe-
ter, which is, that he was chosen by Christ to be-
gin the glorious Work of gathering a Catholick
Church, and therefore he directed his Speech
particularly to him, as the Person who should be
first employed in this business, telling him, *I will*
give thee the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven; be-
cause he was first to open the Gate or Door of
Faith to the Gentiles, and let them into the Church
of

of Christ. This appears from the memorable History of *Cornelius*; upon which he reflects when he tells the Apostles in the Council at *Jerusalem*, *Ye know how that a good while ago, God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my Mouth should hear the Word of the Gospel, and believe, Acts 15.7.* The words are more significant in the Greek, which we translate *a good while ago*, ἀπὸ ἡμερῶν ἀρχαίων, *from the ancient days, or the first times*, God made choice of me from among the rest: which may well refer to those of our Saviour; whose times are the ἀρχή, (*Mark 1. 1.*) *the beginning* of the Gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God, which St. Peter first published among the Gentiles.

This was an Honour peculiar to him, and bestowed on him it's likely, because of the forwardness of his Faith in Christ, and the vehemency of his Affection to him; as well as because he was first chosen to be an Apostle. And with respect to this, we readily acknowledge, Christ promised something singular to him in these words; which was that he should first lay the Foundation of the Church among the Gentiles. Some add among the Jews also, because we read he was the first Speaker upon the day of *Pentecost*, *Acts 1. 14.* But those words sufficiently intimate that the rest of the Apostles then spake as well as he; especially if we compare them with what goes before, *Vers. 7, 8, 9.* where it is said, *The Multitude heard them speak, every Man in his own Language, &c.* Tertullian (s) adds other instances

(s) De Pudicitia C. xxi.

stances of his first exercising the Power of the Keys; but none of them prove more than that he had the Honour to be *primus, non supremus*, first, not supream; *Princeps, post quem alii deinceps*, the chief, or beginning; whom all the rest followed in equal Power and Authority. For he was chief only in Order and Place, not in Dominion, or Jurisdiction.

10. No: We must after all this consider, that our Lord when he spake these words, did not lay the Foundation of the Church, but only promises he would hereafter *build his Church upon this Rock, and give him the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven*: For so the words are in the future Time, *I will build, and I will give thee, &c.* Now, as he makes this Promise to them all, I shewed before, in the next Chapter; so, when he actually gives this Power, which he saith here he *will* give, he bestows it upon every one of them, which was after his Resurrection; *John 20.21. As my Father hath sent me, even so I send you.* Here he speaks in the present Time, and gives them, in this *Commission*, the Power, which they had not before; making them to be what they were ever after. In token of which, *he breathed on them, and said unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose soever Sins ye remit, they are remitted, &c. Verf. 22, 23.* Can any one who reads these words, think that Peter was only *sent*, and made the only *Foundation*, and the only *Gate* to let Men into the Church; when he hears such an Authority as this, granted and sealed to them all? He hath lost then the
ancient

ancient sense of the Church, which *Theophylact* * *Mat. 16. 19.* * represents in these words, *Though it was said to Peter only, Now too, I will give thee, yet it was given to all the Apostles. When? Then, when he said, Whose soever Sins ye remit, they are remitted to them. For, I will give, denotes the future Time; that is, after the Resurrection.* Hear also how *St. Austin* (†) discourses upon these words of the *Psalmist* before-mentioned; *Why are they called the Foundations of the Apostles and Prophets? Because their Authority supports our weakness. And why are they Gates? Because by them we enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. For they preach to us; and when we enter by them, we enter by Christ. Is it not plain by this, that they did not think St. Peter to be the only Man that stands at the Gate, as it were, and with his Keys lets Men into Heaven? To say this, is as much as to say he only preached. Did not St. John preach also, and St. James? As for St. Paul, he laboured more than them all. Therefore I may truly say according to St. Austin's meaning, by John, and by James, as well as Peter, but especially by Paul, we have an entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven. They all had equal Power, they were all equally Gates, whereby Men entred into the New Jerusalem; they were all equally Foundations of the Church of Christ. St. Peter laid the first Stone, as he let in the first of the Gentiles; but St. Paul let in more than he afterwards; as appears by the whole Story of his preaching the Gospel of Christ.*

(†) Enarratio in Psal. 87.

Apostles, and not set the first. 1 Cor. iii. 22. & ix. 9. Gal. ii. 9. Job. i. 45.

Secondly; Supposing it was done designedly in those places, where there is a Catalogue given of the Apostles, the meer placing of a Name first, will prove no Superiority of Power over those who are named after him, as might be shown from a great many instances. For any little advantage of Age, Service, Affection, or the like, may well be a Reason for such Precedence.

Thirdly; The exact truth is, when they were together as a Colledge, it was necessary some one should be first in order: but afterward when they were scattered abroad all over the World, there was no such Precedence thought of. For others, I have shown, are named before him, and sometimes took place of him: as St. James did at Jerusalem, where he presided in the Council held there. Peter indeed spake and delivered his Opinion first, but the Decree is made by James, who saith, after he had taken notice of what Simeon had spoken, *ἐγὼ κελεύω, I determine, or judge, my Sentence is,* (as we translate it) *That we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned unto God; but write to them, that they abstain from Pollutions if Idols, &c. Acts xv. 19, 20.* And accordingly it was drawn up in his very words, in that Letter, which was written in the name of them all, to the Gentile Christians, *Vers. 28, 29.*

This is no novel *Criticism* of Protestants, but acknowledged, heretofore by eminent Writers in

(r) *In Mat. 17.* the Roman Communion. *Alphonsus Toftatus* (r),
for

for instance, observes that in this Council, *Peter* did not produce the definition of the Church; but *James* alone spake *definitively*, as the Organ of the whole Church, and greater than any of the Assessors. And later than this, *Lorinus* * the Je-
suite, here notes, that *James* seems to speak *authentically*, and as a Judge; when *Peter* is said
simply to have spoken his mind. * Comment. in Acta C. xv. fol. 645.

How easie were it here (if I durst take the liberty to strain several Observations, beyond their true intention) to bid you mark and observe how *St. James* declares himself in this Council, the Head of the Church, set over all his Brethren. For, first, he being Bishop of *Jerusalem*, the Mother-Church of the whole World, thus begins his Speech; *Men and Brethren, hearken unto me*, ver. 13. as if he were the Successor of Christ, of whom it was said, *Hear ye Him*. Next, (ver. 14.) he calls him who had spoken before him, bare *Simeon*, not *Peter* now; as if that Name signified Nothing to him, who sate above him. For he adds, as I have said, his *ἐγὼ κρινω*, I judge, or give this sentence. And, lastly, when *Peter* had pleaded for an absolute and indefinite liberty from the burden of all Legal Rites (ver. 10.) *James* thinks fit not to grant them an entire freedom, but to tie them still to some necessary Observances, ver. 19, 28.

But we have not *thus* learned Christ, (as *S. Paul* speaks) that is, the Christian Religion: though from less Circumstances than these, some endeavour to prove the *Monarchy* of *St. Peter*.

Object. 2. Our Saviour, say they, speaks to him after such a particular manner, as argues he intended to bestow on him some particular Grace, not common to him with others. For he calls him by the Name he had before he came to him, and mentions his Father's Name, and the Name he himself had given him; and then alludes to that Name of *Peter*, in the word *Rock*, and gave him a particular Blessing, upon occasion of a particular Act, of his confessing Christ's Divinity, which God in particular revealed to him. All these show, that the Promise made to him, after such a way, and introduced with such peculiar Circumstances, was not common to others, but peculiar to himself.

Ans. But after this labourious heaping up of meer circumstantial things, the Consequence they would infer from hence falls to the ground. Because we are informed by him who cannot deceive us, that he did not design the great Power here promised particularly to him alone, but to them all: for what he promises here to him, *ver.* 19. he promises to them all in the next Chapter, *xviii.* 18. And besides this, as the *substantial* part of this Discourse belongs to them all; so most of the *Circumstances* which I have enumerated, are common to others, and not peculiar to him. For others confessed his Divinity, and were taught it by God, and were blessed, and designed also for Stones in the Fabrick of the Church; as hath been already proved. So that there

there is nothing left but *Simon Bar-jona* (that is, his own Name, and his Fathers Name) and the Name of *Peter*, to support this weighty Foundation of St. *Peter's* Supremacy. And they are very slender things. For the mention of *Bar-jona*, Son of *Jona*, was necessary to distinguish this *Simon*, from the other *Simon Zelotes*: and *Simon* was necessary to be mentioned, that this Son of *Jona* might be distinguished from *Andrew*, who was his Son also. And as for the Name of *Peter*, tho we should grant it to be the very same with the *Rock* after mentioned, it is very far from proving that he alone had the thing, because he alone had the Name: for they were all *Rocks*, I have shown, in the same sense that he was a *Rock*. And the most we can gather from it, or from the rest of these peculiar Circumstances, is this; that he had the Honour promised him of being the *first* that should lay the Foundation of Faith among the Gentiles. Which St. *Ambrose* (y), or some other old *Homilist* that assumed his Name, makes the reason of his being called a *Rock*: *Petra dicitur, eo quod primus in Nationibus, fidei fundamenta posuerit*; He is said to be the *Rock*, because he first laid the Foundations of Faith among the Nations. Which, notwithstanding, did not give him a Supremacy over them; but St. *Paul* was the *Apostle of the Gentiles*, Rom. xi 13. and as God wrought so mightily with him, that he made great Conversions among them; so being brought to Christ, he had upon him the Care of all the Churches, 2 Cor. xi. 28. Which if St. *Peter* had any where

(y) Serm. xlvii. de fide Petri Apostoli.

where said of himself, I am sure it would have been urg'd as an evident proof of his Universal Pastorship : but we make no such Inference from it for *St. Paul*, because we know Christ made no one Head of all Churches, nor gave to any of the Apostles, a Supremacy of Power, and Universality of Jurisdiction.

V.

But beyond all this, there is still a higher Presumption that they are guilty of, who extend the Prerogative supposed to be granted here to *St. Peter*, unto all the succeeding Bishops of *Rome*, whom they make the Heirs of his Authority. In which there are a vast number of Suppositions, that can never be proved ; as many Writers of our Church have shown, and therefore I will not here repeat them. It is sufficient to tell them, that they themselves are forced to grant, That some Speeches of our Saviour, were so personally directed to *St. Peter*, that he himself only was

(?) *Stu Bel-*
larm. Q. 2. de
Pont. Rom. c.
xii. Resp. ad 5.
Object. Calvini.

concerned in them, and not his Successors (x). Now if any, there is great reason to look upon this as one of those Speeches which were limited to *Peter's* Person, and cannot be thought to be intended to any body after him. For,

1. *First*, the description of his Person, by the personal adjuncts, both of his Name, and of his Parentage, may most properly be urged to prove that this Speech is personal ; limited to him alone by express terms of individual difference. And

it

it is observable, that both here, when he saith he will *build his Church upon him*, and when he bids him *Feed his Sheep*, Joh. xxi. 15, 16, 17. he uses the very same terms of individual difference, calling him *Simon Son of Jona*: So that of all the places upon which they of the Church of *Rome* chiefly ground the claim of their Bishops, as his Successors, there are none more personal than these *two*; which most evidently restrain the words to *Peter* alone.

2. And this appears farther, from the impossibility that this Honour of *founding the Church upon him*, should reach beyond his Person. Because there can be no more Foundations of a Building, than are laid at first. All that comes after is built upon that, and is, as we call it, Superstructure. If *St. Peter* therefore were the Foundation of the Church, his Successors cannot be intended in this Name: because the Church is not still to be founded; but all that come after him, do themselves rely upon that Foundation.

3. But the chief thing of all is, That Christ did not lay such a Foundation of his Church, as might fail, and have need of the Succession of another: which was also to fail it self, and required another continued Succession of Foundations. For as the Author to the *Hebrews* proves from hence the Infirmary of the *Aaronical* Priesthood; that their High-Priests being mortal, could not administer an Eternal Priesthood, which belongs to Christ alone, who remains for ever: in
like

like manner may we certainly argue in this matter. If the Foundation of the Church must be constant and permanent, they cannot be the Foundation of it, who dying frequently, make it necessary another should be substituted in their stead : But it was absolutely necessary the Foundation should be perpetual, immoveable, and unalterable, always remaining the same, and never changing ; and therefore we may be sure they are not the Rock on which the Church is built, who are in a perpetual change, and cannot continue, but must give way to others. If we should allow such a Foundation of the Church, we must allow as many several *Foundations* as there are *Popes* : and so the Rock on which the Church is built, cannot be said to be one and the same for ever.

All which shows how true it is, that *Peter* himself was not *that Rock* on which Christ promised to build his Church : unless we understand thereby only his Ministerial Function, which he did not exercise *solely*, but had all the rest Co-workers with him.

VI.

But let us, in the last place, suppose once more, that he was the Rock more than the rest ; yet it is a strange Conclusion from hence, that Christ made him the *Lord and sole Governour of his Church*. For what relation hath a *Rock* to Power, Government, and Dominion ? We may as soon draw

draw Water out of a Pumice, as any such Doctrine out of this word *Rock*; which hath relation only to *Solidity, Firmness, Stedfastness*, or something of that kind; as appears from the very nature of the word, and the use of it in all Authors; where it never imports any thing of that which is now so much pleaded for, and made the Subject of the greatest Contests.

And therefore those Writers who expound these words of *Peter*, say nothing of his Dominion, much less of the Dominion of the *Popes of Rome*, for which there is now so much stickling; but they give us quite another reason, why he is called the *Rock*. Because of the solidity of his Devotion, saith one: because he was *πρὸς πέτραν*, as hard as a Rock, or stone, in the Faith, saith another: because of the *τὸ στέδον τῆς πίστεως*, the firmness of his Faith, saith a third: because of his Faith in the true Rock, saith a fourth: because also he laid the first Foundation of Faith among the Gentiles: and because that this Faith which he professed, *viz. That Jesus Christ is the Son of God*, is the first Principle of our Religion, the beginning of Christianity, the Foundation and Bottom of all that we believe. In which Faith he was so stedfast, that he did not fluctuate in uncertainty, like the rest of the Jews, some of which said, he was *Elias*, others *Jeremias*, others *John the Baptist*, but was settled in this constant Perswasion, that Jesus was the Son of God; which he as constantly preached unto others, and converted unto this Faith.

(a) Haref.
lix. num. 7, 8.

I have not thought it necessary to quote the Authors, where all these things may be found: I will only name *Epiphanius* (a), who speaking of *St. Peter*, whom he calls the most principal of the Apostles, he adds, *Who truly was to us a firm Rock, founding the Faith of the Lord, upon which the Church is altogether built. First, when he confessed Christ to be the Son of the Living God, and heard our Saviour say, Upon this Rock, of an unshaken Faith, will I build my Church. And again, he was a firm Rock, the Foundation of the House of God; when denying Christ, he returned, and had those words said unto him, Feed my Sheep. For Christ saying this; draws us to Repentance; that on him may be built again a well-grounded Faith, which doth not deny Life to those that truly repent.*

Who doth not see, that this Father thought he was the Rock, because he laid the Foundation of Faith in us? And there are those who think, he had the Name of *Peter* given him, to show also the Difficulties and Dangers he was to go through, in that Employment unto which he was called, of preaching the Faith.

But more than such things as these, is not to be drawn out of these words. No such thing as the Infallibility of the Bishop of *Rome*; which is another Presumption built upon this word *Rock*. For supposing *Peter* to be the Rock; that is, faith *Bellarmino*, the Foundation of the Church; thence it follows, he could not err: because then the Foundation would prove ruinous, and the Church, which is the Building, would fall to the ground.

And

And consequently his Successors cannot err, for the same reason; because they are what he was, the Foundation upon which the Church relies, and if they should fail, the Christian Religion might come to nothing. Which is so wretched a sort of reasoning, that it shows the greatest Wits were not able to say any thing considerable in this cause. For it supposes that, which hath no proof at all, that *Peter* was the sole Foundation of the Church. If he were not, then, if this reasoning be good, it proves all Bishops, who are the Successors of the Apostles (and frequently so called by ancient Writers) to be infallible.

But I shall say no more of this; for there are so many flaws in such Discourses, as derive to the Successors, all that was in *Peter*, or the rest of the Apostles, that they are not easily numbred; and I have said enough I hope to show, that all the pretensions of the present Church of *Rome*, grounded upon this place, are weak and without any bottom. They fall to the ground when we come to touch them with one rational thought; and prove like a Building that hath no Foundation. Or, they are not like a Structure built on a Rock; but like a House that Men build on the Sand. There is nothing of solidity, nothing of strength in their Arguments upon this Subject: but after much pains to connect a great many things together, they fall asunder like a Rope of Sand. There is no solid reason to make us think that our Lord spake here of *Peter*; and not of *Himself*: Or, if he spake of *Peter*, that he

meant his Person, and not that Doctrine which he preached. And no reason in the Earth that he spake concerning himself, or his Doctrine only to *Peter*, and not to them all: Or, if we should make this large grant, that he spake only of *Peter*, there is not the least shadow of reason, to make us think he spake of his Dominion, and supreme Power; but only of his steadfastness in the Faith, and his being the *first* Instrument in gathering a Church among the Gentiles: tho he was not the *prime* Instrument, if we thereby understand the chiefest and greatest, for that was *St. Paul*.

Some Uses of what hath been said.

I.

And therefore we are a true Church, though we have nothing to do with the Bishop of *Rome*. This is no part of the definition of a Church, that it is united to him as its Head; but it is intire without it. The Bishop of *Rome* makes all his claim from *St. Peter*; who, it is plain, had no Universal Jurisdiction granted or promised in these words; and therefore the *Pope* can get nothing by them. Faith in Christ Jesus, Communion with our Christian Brethren, and Subjection to those Pastors who are over us in the Lord, are sufficient to make us a Church, whether the *Pope* will or no. Though there were no such Bishop in the World; though the Chair of *St. Peter* were overturned, and no where to be found; the

the Church of Christ would be where it was, built upon the Foundations of the Apostles and Prophets. There is not one of the Apostles that say a word, in their Writings, of the Prerogative of *St. Peter*. Among all their Admonitions to the Churches, they never bid them be subject unto him, much less to his Successors : but only to *those that rule over them*, to those that *admonish them*, and *watch for their Souls*; that is, to their own Pastors and Governors, in those places where they lived.

II.

Since therefore we are undoubtedly a true Church of Christ, though we have no dependence on him, and should have been so though we had never heard there was such a Bishop in the World: let us be mindful of the Exhortation of the Apostle *St. Jude*, ver. 20, 21. which contains the properest Use of what hath been said.

20. *But ye, Beloved, building up your selves on your most holy Faith, praying in the Holy Ghost,*

21. *Keep your selves in the Love of God, looking for the Mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto Eternal Life.*

First; *Build up your selves on your most holy Faith*. Do not think of building upon the Successor of *St. Peter*, as the Priests of the Church of

of Rome would perswade you: but upon that *Christ*, and that *most holy Faith*, on which *St. Peter* himself was built.

There are *three* things which the Apostles of our Lord speak concerning Faith.

First, They speak of *laying the Foundation of it*: which I hope is done already, so that there is no need to exhort you to it: but I may say, as the Apostle doth to the *Hebrews*, *Ch. vi. 1.* *Let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the Foundation of Repentance from dead Works, and of Faith towards God.*

Secondly, They speak of *continuing in the Faith*, for by that we continue in the Church, the Body of Christ. *Rom. xi. 20.* *Thou standest by Faith,* *2 Cor. i. ult.* *by Faith ye stand.*

Thirdly, Of continuing *steadfast* in it; *Col. ii. 5.* *I rejoyce, beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your Faith in Christ.* *1 Cor. xvi. 13.* *Stand fast in the Faith.*

And here *St. Jude* adds an Exhortation to *building up our selves on it*; to endeavour, that is, to increase and grow strong in Faith, by understanding all the Grounds and Reasons on which it relies, by observing all the Testimonies which God hath given to his Son *Jesus Christ*: for this is the *very Foundation of Religion* (to use the words of *St. Chrysostom*) *the original of Righteousness, the head and fountain of Sanctity, the beginning of all true*

true Devotion, the light of the Soul, and the gate of Eternal Life.

But we need not go to *Rome* for any of these; and particularly we may know this great thing, *St. Chrysostom* speaks of; and be sure without consulting them, *that the Son of God is come* (as it is in the last Verse but one of the first Epistle of *St. John*) *and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true* (i. e. the true God, whose Nature, and Will is declared by him) *and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ*; that is, Children of the true God, or his chosen People, in or by his Son Jesus Christ; that is, by hearty Faith in him, who is his only Begotten, of one substance with the Father, full of Grace and Truth.

Of all this, I say we may be sure, (and this, as it there follows, *is the true God, and Eternal Life*) though we never know whether there be such a place as *Rome*, and such a Bishop as the *Pope*: of whom many Christians, no doubt, in several parts of the World, never heard so much as one word. And therefore let us not be so weak as to think we must needs use any of his Tools and Instruments, for the *laying the Foundation*, or for the *building up* our selves in the Christian Faith. Which relies upon the Testimony of all the Apostles; whose words we have recorded in the holy Books, and no where else: and which all the Ministers of Christ have as much Authority to expound as they; and can give as good reason for what they say; as appears by what hath

hath been said upon this place, which is the Principle from whence they would wring (for derive they cannot) so great a Power as they challenge. To which if you submit, it is to undo all that you have done, to *lay again the Foundation of Faith*, or rather to overturn it; and build upon Human Authority instead of Divine. Which is one thing, that would prevail with you, if it were considered, not to give up your selves to their Directions: whose great labour it is to unsettle your Faith, not to strengthen it; to make you doubtful of every thing in the Christian Religion, not to build you up on the Faith of Christ.

Secondly; But besides this, he would have us *pray in the Holy Ghost*. That is, ardently and with such devout Affections, as the Holy Ghost sometimes inspires; and for such things as the Holy Ghost teaches us to ask, in the holy Gospel, which is the Mind of the Spirit of God; and especially to pray thus in the Christian Assemblies. For the Apostle here opposes these things, to the practice of those that *separated themselves*, being *sensual, having not the Spirit*, ver. 19. Our Lord would have us *pray always*, and *in our Closet*, especially in the *Assemblies* of our Christian Brethren: where we must take heed of being frigid or luke-warm; of praying to gratify any of our Carnal Desires, especially that of Revenge (as St. James teaches us, *ch. iv. 1, 2, 3.*) and of praying in the Name of St. Peter, or St. Paul, or any other

other Saint or Angel; for which the Holy Ghost hath given no direction; but quite contrary told us, by the Mouth of his holy Apostles, that *to us there is but one God and one Lord*, 1 Cor. viii. 6. *One God, and one Mediator between God and Man*, 1 Tim. ii. 5. So that, to use any other, is to fall into a *Schism*, to spoil the Unity, and break the Communion of the Church of Christ: as they of the Church of *Rome* have done; both by this, and by changing the ancient *Government, Discipline and Faith* of the Christian Church: Which believed nothing heretofore, concerning *St. Peter*, and his Successor's Supream Power over all the Bishops in the World: who took themselves to be the *Vicars of Christ*, as much as the Bishop of *Rome*. Take a Review of what I have said, and you will see that it is they *who have separated themselves* from the rest of the Christian World, by usurping this Universal Jurisdiction, as well as by many other things; and so broken that Charity, and quenched that loving and kind Spirit, which gives the greatest efficacy to our Prayers, and makes them most fervent and most prevalent. Joyn not therefore your selves to them; but as the Apostle adds in the *third* place,

Thirdly, *Keep your selves in the Love of God*. Our Lord Christ tells you how, *Joh. xv. 10. If ye keep my Commandments, ye shall abide in my Love, &c.* adding *ver. 12. This is my Commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you*: which he repeats again, *Verse 17. These*
 K *things*

things I command you, that ye love one another.

Have a sincere and hearty Affection for all Christian People; and imitate not the *Romanists*, who are out of Charity with the far greatest part of the Christian World.

This Love of God and of our Brethren (which are inseparable) is the fruit of *Faith* and of Prayer: without which they are nothing worth. We must not only *lift up our Hands to God*, which is a description of Prayer: but *lift up our Hands also unto his Commandments, which we have loved* (Psal. cxix. 48.) which is to do God's Will, with a sincere Affection to it. Without such fruits of Faith, we shall not be able to stand fast, in time of Temptation, as Men built upon a Rock: No, our Lord hath told us, that they who hear his Word and do it not, are like to a Man that built his House upon the Sand; which is soon overturned.

If we profess then this Faith which St. *Peter* confessed, that *Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God*, which is the Foundation of Christianity; let us be faithful and obedient unto him in all things. For what he hath bidden us do, as well as what he hath bidden us believe, comes with the very same Authority; and ought to be look'd upon as the words of the ever living God, by his only begotten Son: whom he hath sent to reclaim the World, both from their Infidelity, and from their Impiety.

This is part of the Foundation of our Religion, that we renounce all Wickedness; as well as that
we

we believe our Lord Jesus, to be the eternal Son of God. So St. Paul teaches us, as we translate his words, *2 Tim. ii. 19. The Foundation of God standeth sure, having this Seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his : And, let every one that nameth the Name of Christ depart from Iniquity.* As much as to say, this a settled Truth in the Christian Religion, that they are Christ's, they alone are known, or approved by him, who so profess Belief in him, as to depart from Iniquity. A profession of his Faith we ought to make ; but not content our selves with that alone. We must add something to it, and St. Peter tell us what, *2 Pet. i. 5, 6, 7. Add to your Faith, Vertue ; and to Vertue, Knowledge ; and to Knowledge, Temperance ; and to Temperance, Patience ; and to Patience, Godliness ; and to Godliness, brotherly Kindness ; and to brotherly Kindness, Charity.* For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren, nor unfruitful in the Knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. And so, as St. Jude teaches you in the last place,

Fourthly, You may look for the Mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto Eternal Life. That is, have a good hope to be saved in the day of the Lord, by the great Grace and Mercy of God in Christ Jesus. Stedfastly expect this, and wait for it with a patient hope ; whatsoever any Man can say to discourage you. Let it not shake you, nor make you doubt of the Mercy of God in this way ; unto which the Holy Ghost directs us :

all the Power, to which the Pope pretends from St. Peter, shall never be able to shut you out of Heaven.

He may shut out himself, by his unjust Usurpations, and by his Uncharitableness; and by his unwarrantable Additions to the Christian Doctrine and Religion: but none of those, who trust in God after this manner which I have declared, shall ever be confounded. Let him thunder and lighten as much as he pleases, it shall never hurt, and therefore should not fright any of those pious Souls: nor shall their hope ever make them ashamed. The sound of Damnation perpetually in their Ears, they ought to hear as an empty noise, and vain words, which should not so much as startle, much less terrify them, or turn them out of the way wherein they are.

All the Conceit which others may have of their own Merits, and of the Merits of the Saints, and of the Treasures of their Church, and the Indulgences of the Pope, shall never avail them so much, as the *Mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ* towards those who look for his appearing unto Eternal Life; by an holy Faith, and by ardent Devotion, and by unfeigned Love to God, and to all Christian People. Which cannot fail to commend us sufficiently unto him, *who is able*, as it follows in St. Jude, *to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his Glory with exceeding Joy.*

You

You ought not to question it, nor suffer others to raise doubts in your Minds about it; but in assured hope of it, continually bless and praise the *Father of Mercies*, who hath called you into his Church, chosen you to be his People, wrought Faith, and Love, and hope of Eternal Life in you; saying (as he concludes his Epistle) *To the only Wise God our Saviour, be Glory and Majesty, Dominion and Power, both now and ever. Amen.*

F I N I S.

ERRATA.

- Page 6. line 14. for. *would not*, read *could not*.
 P. 24. l. 14. Marg. r. *Felix* iii.
 P. 30. l. antepen. r. *the greatest*.
 P. 33. l. 19. r. *that they make*.
 P. 41. l. 21. f. *prevent*, r. *pervert*.
 P. 45. l. 18. }
 P. 51. l. 17. } r. *next Chapter but one*.
 P. 56. l. 23. }

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